

Message Text

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13-12

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

PRS-01 /034 W

----- 085377

R 110619Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9347

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2421

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINR, PDIP, PINS, FI, US

SUBJECT: EMBASSY RESPONSE TO GEORGE LENNOX ALLEGATIONS OF CIA
ACTIVITY IN FINLAND

REF: HELSINKI 2409

1. EMBASSY FIRST BECAME AWARE OF LENNOX'S ACTIVITIES
WHEN HE SHOWED UP AT 0800 MONDAY, NOVEMBER 3 AT HOME OF
FIRST SECRETARY SIMENSON. HE TOLD SIMENSON HE HAD BEEN
GIVEN HIS NAME BY AMERICA CENTER IN STOCKHOLM AND ASKED
FOR EMBASSY VIEWS ON FINNISH METALWORKERS' UNION ELECTIONS.
SIMENSON REFERRED HIM TO EMBASSY LABOR ATTACHE IRONS.
LENNOX ALSO ASKED NAME OF EMBASSY PRESS ATTACHE WHICH
SIMENSON SUPPLIED. LENNOX THEN OSTENSIBLY LEFT BUT
LATER SUDDENLY REAPPEARED AND SNAPPED SEVERAL PICTURES
OF SIMENSON OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE.

2. IN TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH PRESS ATTACHE
KNOWLES LATER IN THE DAY LENNOX TOLD KNOWLES HE
WAS DOING EXPOSE OF CIA IN HELSINKI. HE SAID HE
BELIEVED KNOWLES TO BE IN EMPLOY OF CIA AND ASKED
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HIM FOR COMMENT. KNOWLES REPLIED HE COULD NEITHER

CONFIRM NOR DENY SUCH ALLEGATIONS. LENNOX ALSO TOLD KNOWLES HE WAS WORKING UP RADIO/TV PROGRAM TO BE BROADCAST WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5.

3. THUS ALERTED, EMBASSY DEDUCED THAT LENNOX HAD CALLED AT HOMES OF TWO OTHER EMBOFFS OVER PRECEDING WEEKEND POSING AS STRANGER SEEKING DIRECTIONS.

4. WITH THESE FACTS IN HAND, EMBASSY MADE LOW-KEY APPROACH TO KEY CONTACTS IN FINNISH GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING FOREIGN MINISTRY, ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4. WE PARTICULARLY DREW ATTENTION TO UNLIKELIHOOD THAT FINNISH MEDIA WOULD PUBLISH NAMES OF ALLEGED KGB AGENTS. OUR REPRESENTATIONS WERE CONSIDERED AT HIGH LEVELS OF FINNISH GOVERNMENT AND WE WERE ASSURED BY OUR CONTACTS ON WEDNESDAY THAT ALLEGATIONS WOULD NOT APPEAR ON FINNISH TV OR RADIO.

5. CONTACTS AT HELSINGIN SANOMAT, FINLAND'S LARGEST DAILY, ASSURED PRESS ATTACHE THAT PAPER WOULD NOT RUN STORY IN ABSENCE OF POSITIVE PROOF OF LENNOX'S CHARGES. WE ARE ALSO TOLD THAT CHIEF EDITOR OF HELSINKI'S AFTERNOON TABLOID REFUSED TO PUBLISH REPORTER'S ACCOUNT OF LENNOX'S CHARGES FOR SAME REASON.

6. COMMENT: AS NOTED IN REFTEL "EXPOSE" HAS THUS FAR BEEN MOSTLY LIMITED TO COMMUNIST PRESS WHOSE INFLUENCE IS LIMITED. AFFAIR IS LIKELY TO BE QUICKLY FORGOTTEN SINCE MASS CIRCULATION PAPERS AND BROADCAST MEDIA HAVE ADOPTED "HANDS-OFF" POLICY. AUSTAD

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